

The Historacle

The Official Newsletter of the

Talent Historical Society

Where The Past Meets The Future

206 East Main, Suite C • P.O. Box 582 • Talent, Oregon 97540 • 541/512-8838

June 2001



CHARLES RUSSELL OIL PAINTING DISCOVERED IN TALENT

"WAITING FOR A CHINOOK"



In Montana the winter of 1886-87 went down in history as one of the worst winters ever. Those were the days of huge cattle ranches owned by wealthy cattle barons and run by cowboys. Entire herds froze to death as snow fell relentlessly and temperatures dipped to fifty below zero.

Beginning in the winter of 1884, a series of blizzards and harsh winters that started in the Southwest and spread northward took out cattle and humans alike. The Dodge City, Kansas, *Daily Globe* reported on January 11, 1886 that cattle were frozen standing on their feet. An entire family of five were discovered frozen in their beds inside their tar-paper shack. Three men were found frozen huddled in a wagon, the horses were frozen also.

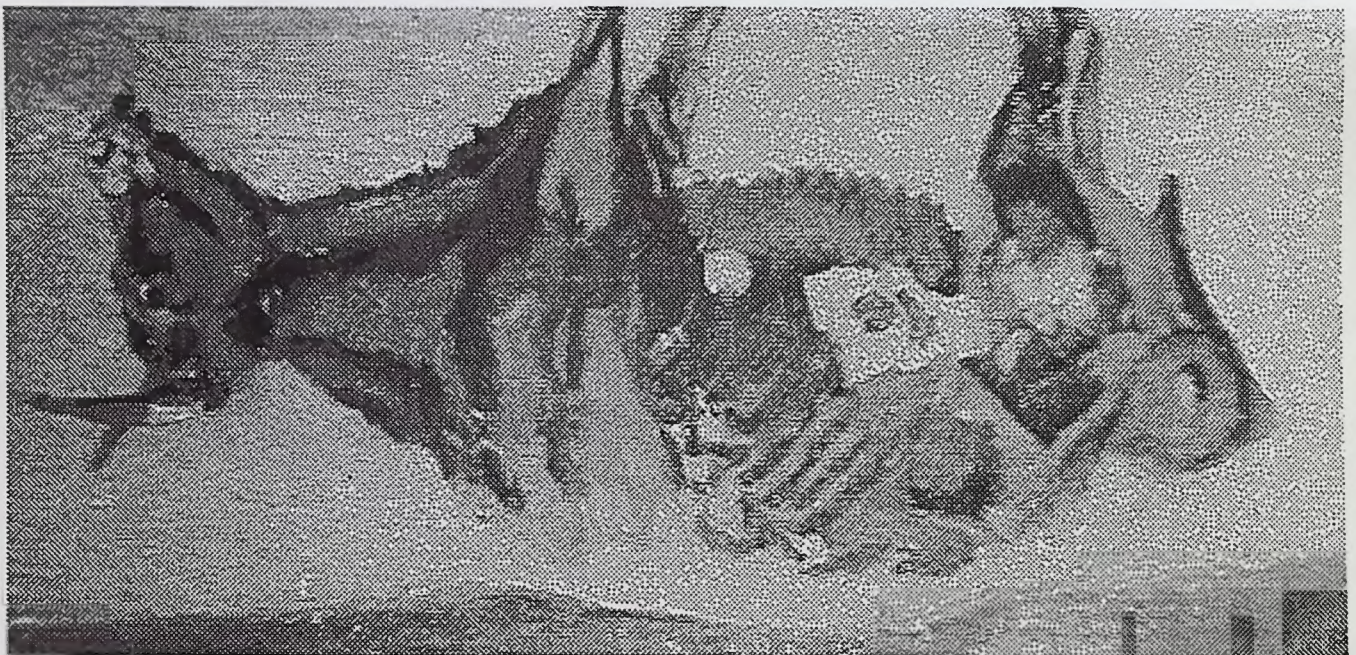
On a ranch in the Judith Basin of Montana a couple of cowboys received a letter from the ranch owner who lived in Helena. He wanted to know how his herd had fared. At a loss for words, one of the cowboys took a piece of white cardboard from a shirt box and sketched a gaunt steer standing in the snow surrounded by a wolf pack. He scrawled on the bottom "Waiting for a Chinook," and "The Last of 5000." The makeshift postcard was sent to Helena, where the ranch owner saw at a glance the fate of his herd. The cowboy artist was Charles Russell.

Strangely enough, the ranch owner liked the sketch so well, that he commissioned Russell to do a watercolor of the scene depicted on the postcard. That postcard and watercolor of "Waiting For a Chinook" are now part of the Charles Russell art collection. But what the art world didn't know is, as Paul Harvey would say, the rest of the story.

Charles Russell like to gamble and drink, usually at the same time. To pay his bar tabs he often left the saloonkeeper with one of his paintings. Enter George Iverson. Iverson was a greenhorn cowboy in the early 1900's on the same ranch where Russell had worked twenty years prior. Also a gambler, Iverson won an oil painting in a card game one day. A painting of a gaunt steer fending off a wolf pack. An oil painting titled "Waiting For a Chinook." Iverson liked the painting and when he eventually moved to Talent, Oregon, he brought it with him, safely packed in his trunk. He built a small cabin on Anderson Creek and hung the painting on the wall. And there it hung until in the early 1990s Iverson's daughter Catherine gave it to her son Don.

Don made a few attempts over the years to get the painting authenticated, but ran into a roadblock. Her name was Ginger Renner. Claiming to own the largest collection of Russell paintings in the world, she refused to admit that there might be one Russell out there that she didn't have. Undaunted, Don kept searching for an authenticator. With the help of his good friend Cliff, Don finally located renowned artist and authenticator Graham Wilmott, currently living in the Eagle Point area. Wilmott was happy to authenticate the piece, based on standard authentication procedures.

A laser copy of "Waiting For a Chinook" was on display at the Talent Historical Society May 26 & 27.



Close-up detail of a "hidden" figure in "Waiting For a Chinook." Charles Russell was known for putting "hidden" figures in his paintings. There are actually several figures in this steer, most of which don't show up in the reproduction. On the right flank of the steer, the Indian woman sitting with her baby is quite vivid. There's also a cowboy hat on the steer's face, one on his rump, and an Indian bowing to a chief on the foreleg/shoulder area.



BRIC-A-BRAC

Welcome

THS welcomed several new members into the Society in the past couple of months. They are: Harlold Ballard, Myrtle Mendenhall, Don and Gayle Wolfington, and Austin Liebler.

Pat Larson has joined us as a volunteer. She has been working on organizing our oral history files. We are so happy to have her able help.

Long-time resident and Talent businesswoman Leola Conner died May 4 at the Medford Rehabilitation and Health Care Center. Leola and her husband Ralph "Jiggs" owned the Talent Chevron service station. Survivors include her daughter Karen Conner, sons Gordon Conner, Rudy Conner and Dean Hall, eight grandchildren, five great-grandchildren and many nieces and nephews. Memorial contributions may be made to the Talent Friends Church, 50 Talent Ave., Talent, Ore., 97540.



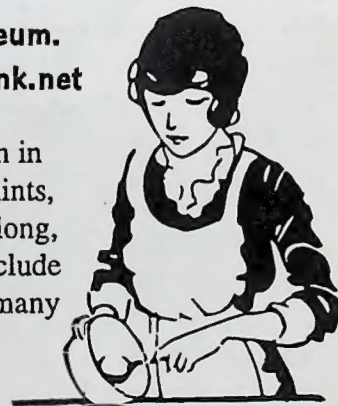
May 26 & 27 an exhibit was held in the Talent Community Center. The exhibit featured antique currency, some dating from the Civil War, and the Charles Russell painting mentioned in the cover story. If you didn't make it, you missed out on a great exhibit.



The exhibit in the THS museum for May and June is music. On display are several pieces of sheet music dating from 1911, music books, including "The Etude Music Magazine" dating from 1927, a fiddle made in 1650, a 125-year-old concertina from Germany, a Mouseketeer record cut from the back of a Wheaties box circa 1956, and a poster advertising an Elvis concert scheduled for six days after his death. From Josef Haydn to the Sons of the Pioneers, the display features a wide variety of musical styles. Come check it out!

Check out our new website at <http://home.earthlink.net/~thsmuseum>. I think you'll like it! Our new email address is: thsmuseum@earthlink.net

Please send in your old-timey recipes to the THS office for inclusion in our upcoming cookbook. If you have any old-fashioned household hints, cooking hints, gardening lore, or what have you, please send those along, too. If your recipe has a history, especially a Talent history, please include it, too. We can't promise to print every submission, but we'll use as many as possible. The deadline for submitting your recipe is July 1.



Help!

The Talent Historical Society is in real need of more volunteers. Espceially needed are museum hosts/hostesses. It's not hard and we'll coach you on what to do. You don't even have to stay there the whole four hours—you can splite the shift with another volunteer. Husband/wife teams are welcome, or if you want to pair up with a friend, that's great, too. Another niche to be filled is the calculation of museum and volunteer hours each month. We need these stats for our records. It's only about a 30-minute job once a month, but a vital one. We also need someone who would be willing to come in clean the office once a week—just sweep/vacuum the floor and maybe dust the windowsills, or whatever. It's not a big room! If you have some extra time and a love of history, your help would be of great value. For more information, call the Society at 512-8838 or come by the office to find out what other opportunities are available.



DAVID DOUGLAS, BOTANIST, SEARCHES NORTHWEST FOR PLANTS—1825-1827

David Douglas, botanist, spent a total of three years in the Oregon Country searching for new plant species. Sent here the first time in 1825, 1826 and 1827 by the Horticultural Society of London, Douglas documented over 800 new species of plants during the three years he spent in the Northwest. He returned for a second trip in 1830. The early 19th century wealthy British "gardening enthusiasts had a mania for domesticating exotic plants." It is Douglas who gave the names to much of the flora of the Pacific Northwest.

David Douglas arrived by ship at Fort George (then the name of Astoria) on 16 April 1825. He was 26 years old—14 years younger than Chief Factor of the Hudson Bay Company in the Oregon Country, Dr. John McLaughlin. Douglas was the son of a Scots stonemason from Scone. He had been apprenticed at age eleven to a gardener on a neighboring estate. Avidly reading travel books and botanical texts, by age twenty Douglas won a place on the staff of the Glasgow botanical gardens. William Jackson Hooker, professor of botany, recommended Douglas for an appointment to the Horticultural Society of London.

The Society appointed Douglas to study nursery developments in the eastern United States and southern Ontario, Canada, and bring back new specimens to the new gardens that were being established by the Society. He did so well during 1823 at this assignment that he was chosen to travel to the Northwest Coast of America. Only two expeditions to the Northwest had deliberately sought botanical and other scientific information: the famed American Lewis & Clark expedition and the British Vancouver expedition whose naturalist was Archibald Menzies. However, in 1824, Hudson Bay Company [whose name officially was the "Company of Adventurers of England trading into Hudson's Bay"] hosted botanist Thomas Drummond who planned to travel north to the Arctic Sea.

In 1825 Fort Vancouver on the Columbia River was in the process of being built, and when Douglas got there, the site was just a pile of logs. Because of the unrest among several tribes of Native Americans, Douglas was initially confined to short trips near the fort. It was on one trip with armed HBC employees to Champoege that Douglas saw some unique pine seeds in an Indian's possible bag. Jean McKay, a HBC employee, knew where the trees which produced the seeds were located—in and south of the Umpqua River valley.

Finally, due to McLaughlin's ability to be both firm and diplomatic, in September 1825, Douglas began traveling alone with only an Indian companion or two. His first major discoveries were of the Noble fir and the Amabilis fir which he found on the walls of the Columbia River Gorge. He spent the wet winter of 1825-26 studying birds, including the North American condor, a bird whose range at that time included the Northwest Coast, although its range is now confined to Southern California north of Los Angeles where a few condors still remain in the wild.

Douglas wandered, usually with Hudson Bay employees all over the Northwest—especially in the Great Basin north of the Columbia River and including southern British Columbia. He usually traveled with a knapsack, a gun and his dog. The native tribesmen, surprised by a white man who was not interested in either land or furs, called Douglas "Grass Man."

Douglas added "fully a thousand names of plants to the vocabulary of science," not including birds, a list which included the elusive Sugarpine which he found east of Roseburg. In the first three years he was in the Northwest, Douglas covered more than 7000 miles before he went back to London. He had sent periodic samples and reports before he personally returned.

The **Historacle** is published quarterly by the
Talent Historical Society

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Comments & letters may be sent to the Editor, **The Historacle**, by mail or by e-mail thsmuseum@earthlink.net. Members of the Society receive **The Historacle** free with membership.

TO THE EMIGRATION OF 1845

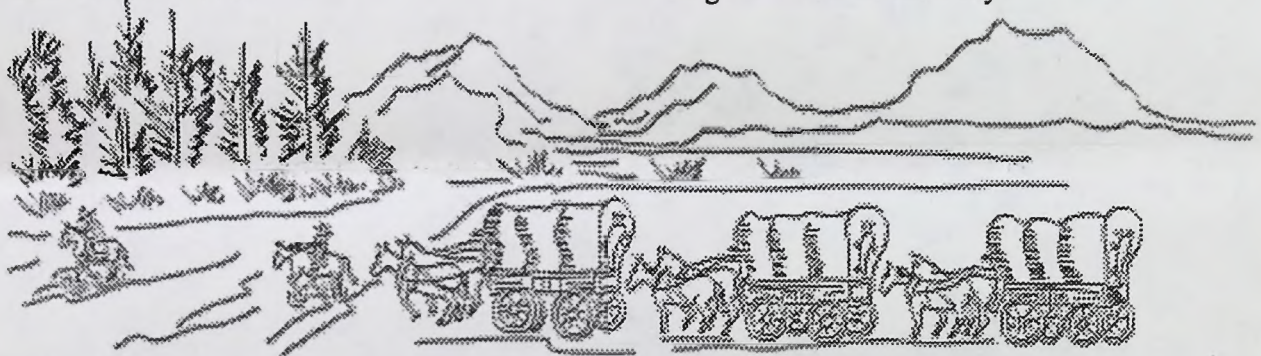
TO THE TUNE "THE GIRL I LEFT BEHIND ME. BY MAJ. SULLIVAN
PUBLISHED IN THE OREGON SPECTATOR OCTOBER 29, 1846

As slow our wagons rolled the track
Their teams the rough earth cleaving.
And drivers all still looking back,
To that dear land they're leaving,
So loth to part from all we love,
From all the links that bind us,
To Turn our hearts wher'er we rove,
To those we've left behind us.

When round the bowl of vanished years,
We talk of joyous seeming,
And smiles that might as well be tears,
So faint an sad their beaming,
While mem'ry brings us back again,
Each early tie that twin'd us,
O sweet the cup that circles then,
To those we've left behind us.

And when in other climes we meet,
Some isle or vale enchanting,
Where all looks wild, flowery and sweet,
And naught but love is wanting,
We think how great had been our bliss,
If heaven had but assigned us,
To live and die mid scenes like this,
With some we've left behind us.

Yet we have made a home once more,
In the Willamette valley,
And all the boys, both rich and poor,
May go and court Miss Sally,
As to myself, I count me blest,
If you will all excuse me,
To ease the pain that's in my breast,
I'll go and court Miss Susy!



RESERVATION LIST OF NATIVE AMERICANS IN 1856 REVEALS HOW FEW WERE STILL ALIVE

In November 1856, a census taken at the Grand Ronde Reservation west of McMinnville, revealed a total of 1925 Native Americans in residence of which 909 were Takelmas from the Rogue River valley area (a figure which included some small bands from other local tribes). Shasta, Umpquas and Calapooyas numbered 262, and scattered bands from the Willamette valley numbered 660. These were nearly all the Native Americans alive in the river valleys between the Coast Range and the Cascades.

The coastal tribes were confined at the Siletz reservation and numbered 554 Rogue Rivers and Shastas, and 1495 individuals from other tribes: Ioshutz, Checcoos, Too-too-ta-ays, Mac-ca-noo-tangs, Coquille, Port Orford, Sixes, Flores Creek, Shasta-Costas and Yuroks. Approximately 3000 natives remained alive west of the Cascades after thirty-years of Oregon settlement. Most of Oregon's Native Americans died from disease: flu, malaria, smallpox, venereal disease, chicken pox, measles, tuberculosis, whooping cough, and diphtheria. These epidemics, many brought to Oregon when children came with their parents down the Oregon Trail, laid the native population low; and the lethal situation was compounded by malnutrition, stress, and various emotional problems created by the loss of hunting areas, the decline of fish runs due to placer mining, confiscation of food collection areas in the valleys by white farmers, and similar complications. (*Statistics take from Charles C. Carey, General History of Oregon.*)

BEESON/FOSS FAMILY PHOTO

Historacle editor Bob Casebeer has recently been in contact with Nicholas Welborn Beeson, grandson of Welborn Beeson, Jr. of historic Talent. Nicholas sent Bob this photo via email. In generational order the people in the photo are: Martha Jane Coolidge Chapman Wilkinson, Emma Jane Chapman Foss, Nellie Jane Foss Beeson, and Lewis Beeson. From top to bottom, left to right they are: Nellie Jane Foss Beeson, Emma Jane Chapman Foss, Martha Jane Coolidge Chapman Wilkinson, and Lewis Beeson.



Photo taken circa June 1903.

Do you have any old photos of Talent pioneer residents that you would like to see printed in the Historacle? We would need to borrow the photo long enough to scan it (usually 24 hours) then you could pick it up again.

Wagon trains crossing the Plains to Oregon in 1846 could use the new Barlow Road. The first train to use the Applegate Trail, or the Southern Route, was the Kirquendal (sometimes spelled Kirkendall) company, a train of approximately 100 wagons. In 1851 the gorge of Canyon Creek, the route now taken by I-5, was the trail and the wagons had to go three miles through the running water of the creek.

The donation land law, which provided 320 acres of land for a single man and 640 acres for a married couple, has been described as "a banquet at which each guest was encouraged to swallow more than he could digest!" The law also had some negative side-effects: the settlement pattern limited the growth of rural settlements as each resident might be more than a mile from the nearest neighbor, and few Oregon settlers were living within riding distance of a store.

"If you don't know who your ancestors are, you're an orphan. And in many ways the contemporary world has been orphaned from its past because we've come to know so little about it."

~Thomas Cahill, contemporary author of history of science books.

OUR LIVES, OUR FORTUNES, OUR SACRED HONOR.

Though the resolution was formally adopted July 4, it was not until July 8 that two of the states authorized their delegates to sign, and it was not until August 2 that the signers met at Philadelphia to actually put their names to the Declaration.

William Ellery, delegate from Rhode Island, was curious to see the signers' faces as they committed this supreme act of personal courage. He saw some men sign quickly, "but in no face was he able to discern real fear." Stephen Hopkins, Ellery's colleague from Rhode Island, was a man past 60. As he signed with a shaking pen, he declared: "My hand trembles, but my heart does not."

"Most glorious service"...

Even before the list was published, the British marked down every member of Congress suspected of having put his name to treason. All of them became the objects of vicious manhunts. Some were taken. Some, like Jefferson, had narrow escapes. All who had property or families near British strongholds suffered.

Francis Lewis, New York delegate, saw his home plundered and his estates, in what is now Harlem, completely destroyed by British soldiers. Mrs. Lewis was captured and treated with great brutality. Though she was later exchanged for two British prisoners through the efforts of Congress, she died from the effects of her abuse.

William Floyd, another New York delegate, was able to escape with his wife and children across Long Island Sound to Connecticut, where they lived as refugees without income for seven years. When they came home, they found a devastated ruin.

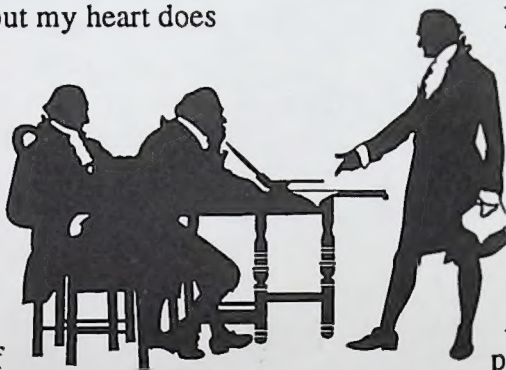
Phillips Livingstone had all his great holdings in New York confiscated and his family driven out of their home. Livingstone died in 1778 still

working in Congress for the cause.

Louis Morris, the fourth New York delegate, saw all his timber, crops, and livestock taken. For seven years he was barred from his home and family.

John Hart of Trenton, New Jersey, risked his life to return home to see his dying wife. Hessian soldiers rode after him, and he escaped in the woods. While his wife lay on her deathbed, the soldiers ruined his farm and wrecked his homestead. Hart, 65, slept in caves and woods as he was hunted across the countryside. When at

long last, emaciated by hardship, he was able to sneak home, he found his wife had already been buried, and his 13 children taken away. He never saw them again. He died a broken man in 1779, without ever finding his family.



Dr. John Witherspoon, signer, was president of the College of New Jersey, later called Princeton. The British occupied the town of Princeton, and billeted troops in the college. They trampled and burned the finest college library in the country.

Judge Richard Stockton, another New Jersey delegate signer, had rushed back to his estate in an effort to evacuate his wife and children. The family found refuge with friends, but a sympathizer betrayed them. Judge Stockton was pulled from bed in the night and brutally beaten by the arresting soldiers. Thrown into a common jail, he was deliberately starved. Congress finally arranged for Stockton's parole, but his health was ruined. The judge was released as an invalid, when he could no longer harm the British cause. He returned home to find his estate looted and did not live to see the triumph of the revolution. His family was forced to live off charity.

Robert Morris, merchant prince of Philadelphia, delegate and signer, met Washington's appeals and

Continued on page 8

pleas for money year after year. He made and raised arms and provisions which made it possible for Washington to cross the Delaware at Trenton. In the process he lost 150 ships at sea, bleeding his own fortune and credit almost dry.

George Clymer, Pennsylvania signer, escaped with his family from their home, but their property was completely destroyed by the British in the Germantown and Brandywine campaigns.

Dr. Benjamin Rush, also from Pennsylvania, was forced to flee to Maryland. As a heroic surgeon with the army, Rush had several narrow escapes.

John Morton, a Tory in his views previous to the debate, lived in a strongly loyalist area of Pennsylvania. When he came out for independence, most of his neighbors and even some of his relatives ostracized him. He was a sensitive and troubled man, and many believed this action killed him. When he died in 1777, his last words to his tormentors were: "Tell them that they will live to see the hour when they shall acknowledge it (the signing) to have been the most glorious service that I rendered to my country."

William Ellery, Rhode Island delegate, saw his property and home burned to the ground.

Thomas Lynch, Jr., South Carolina delegate, had his health broken from privation and exposures while serving as a company commander in the military. His doctors ordered him to seek a cure in the West Indies and on the voyage he and his young bride were drowned at sea..

Edward Rutledge, Arthur Middleton, and Thomas Heyward, Jr., the other three South Carolina signers, were taken by the British in the siege of Charleston. They were carried as prisoners of war to St. Augustine, Florida, where they were singled out for indignities. They were exchanged at the end of the war, the British in the meantime having completely devastated their large land holdings and estates.



Thomas Nelson, signer of Virginia, was at the front in command of the Virginia military forces. With British General Charles Cornwallis in Yorktown, fire from 70 heavy American guns began to destroy Yorktown piece by piece. Lord Cornwallis and his staff moved their headquarters into Nelson's palatial home. While American cannonballs were making a shambles of the town, the house of Governor Nelson remained untouched. Nelson turned in rage to the American gunners and asked, "Why do you spare my home?" They replied, "Sir, out of respect to you." Nelson cried, "Give me the cannon!" and fired on his magnificent home himself, smashing it to bits. But Nelson's sacrifice was not quite over. He had raised \$2 million for the Revolutionary cause by pledging his own estates. When the loans came due, a new peacetime Congress refused to honor them, and Nelson's property was forfeited. He was never reimbursed. He died, impoverished, a few years later at the age of 50.

Lives, fortunes, honor...

Of those 56 who signed the Declaration of Independence, nine died of wounds or hardships during the war. Five were captured and imprisoned, in each case with brutal treatment. Several lost wives, sons or entire families. One lost his 13 children. Two wives were brutally treated. All were at one time or another the victims of manhunts and driven from their homes. Twelve signers had their homes completely burned. Seventeen lost everything they owned. Yet not one defected or went back on his pledged word. Their honor, and the nation they sacrificed so much to create, is still intact.

And, finally, there is the New Jersey signer, *Abraham Clark*. He gave two sons to the officer corps in the Revolutionary Army. They were captured and sent to the infamous British prison hulk afloat in New York harbor known as the hell ship "Jersey," where 11,000 American captives were to die. The younger Clarks were treated with a special brutality because of their father. One was put in solitary and given no food. With the end almost in sight, with the war almost won, no one

DOWNSTREAM CALENDAR

"If we forget where we came from, we will never get to where we are going!"

Talent Historical Society Museum,
Talent Community Center.

Museum Open hours:

Mon.—Sat. 10:00 a.m.—2:00 p.m.

June 14, 2001 Thursday 10:00 a.m.—12:00 p.m.
JCHMA meeting, Railroad Museum.

June 17, 2001 Happy Father's Day!

June 26, 2001 Tuesday 6:00 p.m.

Talent Library.

Board meeting of the **Talent Historical Society** directors. Members and general public invited to attend. *Note change of day/time.*

July 4, 2001 Happy Birthday, America!
Have a safe Fourth!

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could have blamed Abraham Clark for acceding to the British request when they offered him his sons' lives if he would recant and come out for the King and parliament. The utter despair in this man's heart, the anguish in his very soul, must reach out to each one of us down through 200 years with his answer: "No."

The 56 signers of the Declaration of Independence proved by their every deed that they made no idle boast when they composed the most magnificent curtain line in history. "And for the support of this Declaration with a firm reliance on the protection of divine providence, we mutually pledge to each other our lives, our fortunes and our sacred honor."

When you enjoy your day off for the 4th of July this year, and enjoy picnics and fireworks and baseball games, think about the freedoms that you enjoy because of the convictions and sacrifices of those early patriots. Put yourself in their shoes and think about the decisions that they made. These men are the (mostly forgotten) true heroes of this country.

~Author Unknown~

July 24, 2001 Tuesday 6:00 p.m.

Talent Library.

Board meeting of the **Talent Historical Society** directors. Members and general public invited to attend.

August 28, 2001 Tuesday 6:00 p.m.

Talent Library.

Board meeting of the **Talent Historical Society** directors. Members and general public invited to attend.



FRENCH SPEAKING PIONEERS FILTER THROUGH ROGUE RIVER VALLEY IN 1841

One of the usually unrecorded traveling groups which went through the Rogue Valley on their way to the upper Willamette Valley were members of the French-speaking community. According to a French government scout, Eugen Duflot de Mofras, several French settlers, especially one Stanislas Jacquet, went to California yearly to buy cattle and horses. At that date de Mofras estimated that the French-speaking Oregonians had 3000 head of cattle, 3000 swine, 500 sheep and harvested 10,000 hectoliters of wheat (a hectoliter is 100 liters so each hectoliter was about 2.4 bushels—or the total wheat produced by the French-speaking population was 24,000 bushels). In addition to wheat, 3000 hectoliters of field peas and kidney beans were harvested, some 7200 bushels of these legumes. The upper Willamette Valley was obviously a rich agricultural producing area by 1841.

(Data taken from Carey's History of Oregon, p. 371)

EDITORIAL



MUSEUM SPACE A PROBLEM

As many of you members are aware, the actual space that the Society has for display of historical objects is quite limited. The present space in the Talent Community Center which is generously provided by the City of Talent houses, both the museum function, the office, the sales shop and all of the documents, interviews and research library of the Society. In addition, the original tape interviews and other materials which can be stored on computer disks are in a safety deposit vault at the bank. Large objects, donated to the Society, are under lock and key at a relatively small commercial storage unit.

The Society has received as a gift from a trust \$15,000 for improvement of this tight space problem. The board contacted the City of Talent and if the engineering problems can be solved the space that once housed the Talent Library almost directly below our present quarters might ease at least temporarily the space situation. This proposal was made last fall, but as yet little has been resolved. The building is the city's and any maintenance to solve what has been a wet-basement problem must be done by the city, even if we have funds to assist in that effort.

In the meanwhile, with the exception of short displays like the recent coin and money exhibit and the Russell painting, we are confined to one display cabinet, some portable photo panels, and the walls of the present museum spaces. The exhibit committee has done remarkably well under these conditions.

Members of the Society can see why the preservation efforts of the Society have been in the area of documents, photographs, and oral interviews. In that way, we can preserve the history of the unique Talent area, and keep the material on audio tapes or on computer disks, or on the original documents.

Indeed we have a space problem, and simply ask the members of the Society to bear with us as the Board attempts to remedy the situation. Of course, if any member has a house in a key location they would like to donate to the Society to resolve the space problem, the Board would certainly enter into immediate discussion with that member. In the meantime, the old city library and Boy Scout meeting area seems the best way to relieve the space crunch at least temporarily.



*Enjoy the
Summer!*

TALENT HISTORICAL SOCIETY

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